

What Happens to Our Recyclables?

Do you ever wonder what happens to your cereal boxes, tin cans, and milk jugs after you set them out at the curb or bring them to your local drop off center? For those recyclable materials, the curb is just the first stop on a long journey. Listed below are some common materials accepted for recycling in many of Maine's municipal programs. Under each material, in italics, is a list of recycled products that can be made using that particular material.

Paper Stream

Several different recyclables from the paper stream are listed individually below. It is important to remember that each municipal program differs in the manner that they collect paper and other recyclables from their residents. Some municipalities may collect only newspaper and magazines, while others may collect a "mixed paper" that includes paperboard, unwanted mail, and more.



Newspaper

Products made from newspaper: telephone directory paper; newsprint; building insulation; animal bedding; construction paper; egg cartons; berry boxes; and paperboard. Most of the newspaper collected in Maine is recycled at the Great Northern Paper Company paper mill in East Millinocket.

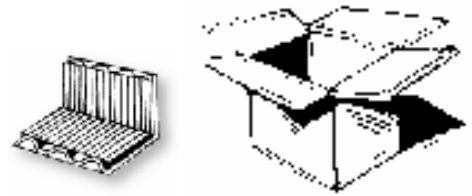
Magazines

Products made from magazines: paperboard; telephone directory paper; and newsprint. Magazines may be mixed with newspaper. The Great Northern Paper Company paper mill uses this blend in making newsprint.

Corrugated Cardboard

Products made from corrugated cardboard: paperboard; cardboard; and cardboard medium (squiggly middle of corrugated cardboard).

Some of Maine's corrugated cardboard is used in-state, but the majority is shipped to Canada and overseas.



Office Paper

Products made from office paper: new office paper; paper napkins; facial tissue; toilet tissue; and paper towels. Office paper includes white ledger, bond paper, and computer paper. Some of Maine's office paper goes to the Cascades - Auburn Fibers pulping operation in Auburn where it is processed for eventual use at other paper mills.

Paperboard/Residential Mixed Paper (cereal boxes, egg cartons, toilet paper rolls, etc.)

Products made from paperboard/residential mixed paper: paperboard; egg cartons; berry cartons; coffee filters; and paper backing on roofing shingles.



Paperboard is the main material in Mixed Residential Paper, which, depending on the program, may include paperboard, magazines, newspapers, and unwanted mail. Much of Maine's paperboard and mixed residential paper is exported to Canada.

Container Stream

Most containers collected for recycling in Maine are sent out of state for processing.



Steel/Tin Cans

Products made from steel cans: new steel cans; vehicles; oil filters; bicycles; paper clips; steel beams; and other steel products. Steel is used in the remanufacture of many new products.

Much of this product is used on the east coast of the U.S. and in Canada. All steel contains a minimum of 25% recycled content.

Aluminum (Used Beverage Containers)

Products made from aluminum: new cans; rain gutters; window frames. Most of the aluminum that gets recycled is made into new aluminum cans. Producing new cans from recycled aluminum saves 95% of the energy and emits 95%-97% less air and water pollution than producing cans from ore, known as bauxite. Maine's aluminum is shipped out of state and used primarily to make new cans.

Glass Bottles/Jars

Products made from glass: new glass containers; "glassphalt" for highway construction; fiberglass. All types of used glass containers can be reused indefinitely to make new glass products. The containers are crushed into small pieces called cullet. The cullet is then processed to remove any contamination and melted down to make new bottles and jars. Brown (or *amber*) and green glass present more problems in recycling than clear glass (or *flint*) since it is difficult to control color of the mixture, and appearance of the final product dictates the market. One of the primary markets for Maine's glass is a mill in Franklin, Massachusetts.



Plastics

Plastics can often be confusing because there are so many different types of plastics on the market, and these different types cannot be mixed for recycling. In addition, sometimes even products made from the same type of plastic cannot be recycled together because they are produced by different processes. For example, laundry detergent bottles and shopping bags may both be HDPE #2, but cannot be recycled together. The most commonly recycled plastics are "blow molded" HDPE (milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles) and PET (soda bottles). Colored plastics are less versatile for recyclers and therefore may fetch a lower price in the recycling market. Most of these materials that are collected in Maine programs go to Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Alabama where they are made into new products and containers.

- **PET (#1) - Plastic Beverage Bottles**

Products made from PET: carpet fibers; pillow/sleeping bag fill; drainage pipes; clothing; polar fleece; and luggage.

- **HDPE (#2) - Plastic Bottles & Jugs**

Products made from HDPE: toys; traffic cones; new bottles; flower pots; trash cans; recycling bins; and drainage pipes.

CUT & PASTE YOUR MUNICIPAL INFORMATION HERE!

This flyer is meant to serve as a template for you to personalize and distribute to your residents. Cut and paste your municipal recycling info here, such as Recycling Facility location, hours, and materials accepted; curbside schedule information; special events, etc. Then, simply photocopy this informative flyer onto colorful paper (double-sided, of course) and make them available at the transfer station, town office, local stores, and other locations!